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FILE 582-736 G. Brit.

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20th September 1972

AIRMAIL

Dear Sir,

British Patent Application No. 40138/71
Your File: 582-736 Gt. Britain. Our Folio
No. A/18002 - TR/PBM

We are enclosing a copy of the first Official Letter to issue on this application. Referring to the numbered paragraphs our comments are as follows:

1, 2 & 6. We referred in our letter of 2nd September 1971 to the possibility of the Examiner raising an objection of plurality of invention. In your reply, dated 16th September 1971, you indicated that you would be prepared to cancel the claim to the intermediate product, that is claim 21. Please confirm that this is still the case.

As the Examiner indicates in paragraph 6 the subject matter of claim 22 does not appear to be clearly distinguished from the prior art acknowledged on page 2 of the specification. If this claim is amended to reflect the process by which the product is obtained then it does not appear that it will differ from the product by process claim, claim 20. We would therefore suggest the cancellation of claim 22. Claim 23 could perhaps be retained if it is made appendant to claim 20.

3. The Examiner is probably correct in his observations and at the very least it will be necessary to specify the conditions under which ammonia is evolved. Presumably the necessary conditions are that ammonia be evolved at the temperature to which the treated tobacco is heated. If the only ammonium compounds which can be used are ammonium carbonate and ammonium bicarbonate then claim 11 should be combined with claim 1.

4. This change is probably not absolutely essential but we can see no harm in making it.


5. This is in accordance with British practice and we shall make the change requested by the Examiner.

7. Claim 1 at present requires that the treated tobacco be heated in order to puff the tobacco. As pointed out by the Examiner the disclosure at page 9, line 15 does suggest that puffing can be achieved merely by reducing the pressure. If this is in fact the case then claim 1 should be suitably amended. Alternatively, if mere reduction of pressure cannot achieve the desired effect, the disclosure on page 9 will have to be suitably amended.

8. These are matters with which we shall be able to deal.

No term has been appointed for replying to the Official Letter but, in order to afford ample time for completing prosecution of the application before the acceptance date of 26th February 1974 we would recommend the filing of a response within six months of the date of this letter, i.e. by 20th March next.

Yours faithfully,


J.A. KEMP & CO.

PBM/GS.

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